

**SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR MASKING UNWANTED AMBIENT NOISE AND
HANDSET AND CENTRAL OFFICE EQUIPMENT INCORPORATING THE SAME**

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A system for, and method of, obscuring ambient noise. In one embodiment, the system includes: (1) a background sound generator, (2) a mixer coupled to the background sound generator and (3) a user interface, coupled to the mixer, that, upon a user command, causes the mixer to mix an output of the background sound generator with a transmitted signal. The background sound may be music, white noise, colored noise, out-of-phase ambient noise, simulated alternative ambient noise or any other suitable background sound. The system may be associated with a wireless handset, a wireline handset, central office equipment or any other suitable location or equipment.